

## Chapter 4 *Nutrition Education*

### Module 4: Healthy Eating Links

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#### Step Up and Step Out to link nutrition education

**Imagine...**reaching for the Stars while floating on The Ship of Healthy Choices in the Sea of Opportunities!



**Imagine...**Carruther B.A. Carrot making a guest appearance during school lunch and passing out carrot sticks. And then the classroom teacher talking about how vegetables fit into a healthy eating plan; the music teacher inviting Carruther to teach students a “carrot” rap song; and the art teacher working with students to paint with “carrot stencils.”



**Imagine...**the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class learning a fruit and vegetable skit complete with fruit and vegetable puppets and musical instruments, and then presenting it at senior citizen centers.

**Imagine...**a Saturday morning “nutrition-story hour” in the local grocery store where the kids are engaged in listening to a story about Henry and chocolate noodles in “Chocolate Fever” by Robert Kimmel Smith (1); then discussing healthy eating choices while parents grocery shop.



If you can imagine these scenes, you won't have problem linking nutrition with other activities!

### **Integrating nutrition education**



There are so many opportunities to link nutrition education with other activities. The key to taking action is to allow time for planning! At school, it is helpful to schedule a time at the beginning of the school year to allow staff to share their ideas and plans for linking so that everything can be coordinated.

Your community review gives a base from which to build. Use it! Continue networking efforts to determine interests and needs for education!

## **Classroom nutrition education links to school food service**

Teaming up with school food service creates real world examples for classroom discussions and opens the door for student input. Participation in menu planning makes students feel empowered, teaches teamwork and problem solving, and creates a good marketing tool.

### **Examples:**



**Example 1:** Have students discuss nutrients in school meals and calculate the differences when portion sizes are changed. This can be a great activity that integrates with math and links food service!

**Example 2:** Have students measure and compare grams of fat in a school meal and in a typical fast food meal.

Whenever possible, have food service staff participate in the discussions or display classroom nutrition lessons in the cafeteria!

## **Healthy eating/nutrition education links with school faculty and staff**

School faculty and staff are very important role models for students. Teachers may seem reluctant to increase opportunities for nutrition education but this may be due to a lack of time for planning, or for acquiring the information needed to present nutrition activities, or because of a focus on state mandated requirements. All of these issues should be checked.



The coalition may be able to lighten the load by providing volunteers for assistance with taste testing, copying, and setting up projects. The coalition can also help gain support from administrators for efforts and identify suggestions for integrating nutrition education with other subjects.

**Examples:**



**Example 1:** Increase awareness and education by including nutrition education information in staff newsletters.

**Example 2:** Build a Food Guide Pyramid train grouped with empty food packages—have staff bring in empty packages along with students and have students decide where they belong.

**Example 3:** Have a Pyramid tasting party at a staff meeting with different staff members bringing ideas they have used in class.

## **Healthy eating links the school and the community**

Using the community as a living classroom brings home the message to each and every student. With partnerships created by the coalition, teachers can create educational lessons using resources from throughout the community. Class lessons can stand-alone or can be tied to community events. Team-teach with community members and utilize community resources!

When you include your community partners in the planning and education process a link is established. Establish enough links in your community to build a network that will help carry your message throughout the region.

**Examples:**



**Example 1: It's A Zoo Out There!**

In math class, students calculated the distance from their school to the local zoo. They walked during part of recess, and logged the distance until it equaled a round trip to the zoo. The class then took a field trip to the zoo, where animal trainers provided a day full of education. They taught students about the nutritional needs and physical activity habits of animals. Healthy snacks and a nutritious sack lunch were coordinated with school food service for the students, teachers, volunteer coalition members, and parents.



**Example 2: Health fairs can be fun!**

Students invited the community to school for a health fair they created. A “play” oven and refrigerator to “bake” or “store” nutrition information and recipes were used! Students built a Pyramid by drawing pictures on empty boxes. It was fun and drew lots of interest!

**Example 3:** Classes took field trips to grocery stores, restaurants, and fast food establishments to “practice” healthy choices!

**Example 4:** Several communities started garden programs complete with master gardeners! Gardening presented the opportunity to teach nutrition while engaging in physical activity! A large plot of land is not required! Schools can have their own gardens in very small spaces. One creative community used a donated wheel- barrow to fill with rocks, sand, and dirt...not to transport, but to plant! The wheelbarrow became a unique garden container, provoking much interest!

## Linking nutrition education in schools with parents

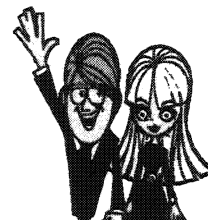


Parents are a strong link. Although it is sometimes difficult to connect with parents... remember that everyone likes to have fun. Be on the lookout for fun actions! Also create interest with easy to use information.

### Examples:



**Example 1:** Students create healthy snack recipes in class that can be used for classroom parties. Send the recipes home with a note to parents about preparing “their” child’s healthy recipe for the next classroom party. Create a recipe book.



**Example 2:** Parents review labels of at home snack foods (with students using guidelines provided in class) and send them to school for “show and tell.”

**Example 3:** Ask parents who have experience with foods from other cultures to volunteer classroom time to discuss an ethnic food—Have the class prepare a simple ethnic recipe if possible.

**Example 4:** Have students make a Mother’s Day cookbook using fruit and vegetable recipes! Or hold a Mother’s Day “tea party” with healthy snacks students have prepared. Make sure every student has a mother or other significant guest for the party.

## Linking classroom, physical education, and school meals

5 A Day, a campaign partnership by Dole, Produce for Better Health Foundation, and the National Cancer Institute (2) provides many great ideas that can be used for linking. Use your imagination with the suggestions given to see how many different ways you might be able to link the activity.

### Examples:

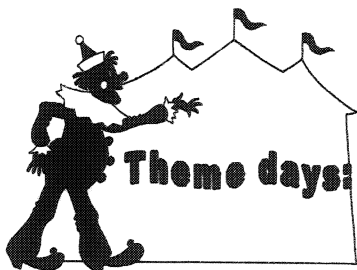


**Example 1:** Plan an “Apple Day.” Look at the many forms of apples: applesauce, apple butter, apple juice, apple cider, and apple cobbler. Talk about growing, harvesting, transportation in the classroom. Bring pictures, food, have a tasting party, and discuss. Sing a “Johnny Appleseed” song in music, play apple games in physical education, and make apple “gift” bags (with brown lunch sacks) in art. Use menu trivia for the school meal: How many seeds do most apples have? (Answer: 10—discuss in class, have apples in the cafeteria, answer the question in PE and talk about balance of food intake with activity)



**Example 2:** Cut out pictures of fruits and vegetables from magazines. Talk about fruits and vegetables in other countries. Make a 5 A Day poster in art class and have a school-wide poster contest.

**Example 3:** Use “mystery fruits/vegetables” in a paper bag (feel shape, smell, and guess the mystery) to discuss the five senses in the classroom. Sing fruit and veggie “rap” songs (5 A Day materials) in music, make fruit and veggie placemats in art, and have classes submit “different” fruit and veggie ideas for food service to try!



“Recognized Days” make great opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity fun! A few examples are provided on the following pages.



<p><b>January</b>  <u>New Year's Day</u>    <u>Super Bowl</u>    <u>Chinese New Years</u>—sometime between Jan 21 and Feb 19</p>	<p><b>February</b>  <u>American Heart Month</u>  American Heart Association  1-800-AHA-USA1    <u>Valentine's Day</u>    <u>Black History Month</u>    <u>National PTA Founders' Day</u>    <u>National FFA Week</u>  Future Farmers of America  703-360-3600</p>	<p><b>March</b>  <u>National Nutrition Month</u>  American Dietetic Association  1-800-877-1600    <u>National School Breakfast Week</u>—1<sup>st</sup> full week  American School Food Service Assoc. 703-739-3900    <u>St. Patrick's Day</u></p>
<p><b>April</b>  <u>Earth Day</u>    <u>World Health Day</u>—April 7  American Assoc. for World Health  202-466-5883    <u>National Public Health Week</u>—1<sup>st</sup> full week  American Public Health Assoc.  202-789-5600    <u>National Youth Sports Safety Month</u>  National Youth Sports Safety Foundation  617-449-2499    <u>National Garden Week</u>—2<sup>nd</sup> full week  National Garden Bureau  630-963-0770</p>	<p><b>May</b>  <u>Cinco de Mayo</u> – May 5  <u>National Physical Ed &amp; Sports Week</u>—1<sup>st</sup> week  American Alliance for Health Physical Ed, Recreation &amp; Dance 703-476-3412  <u>National Physical Fitness &amp; Sports Month</u>  President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports  202-272-3426  <u>National Bike Month</u>  League of Am Bicyclists  410-539-3399  <u>All Children Exercise Simultaneously Day</u>—1<sup>st</sup> Wed  Youth Fitness Coalition, Inc.  201-433-8993  <u>Employee Health/Fitness Day</u>  National Assoc. of Governors' Councils on Physical Fitness and Sports 317-237-5630  <u>American Running/Fitness Week</u>—2<sup>nd</sup> week  Am. Running &amp; Fitness Assoc.  1-800-776-2732  <u>National Water Fitness Month</u>  U.S. Water Fitness Assoc, Inc.  561-732-9908  <u>National High Blood Pressure Month</u>  National Heart, Lung, &amp; Blood Institute 301-251-1222  <u>Older American's Month</u>  Ad on Aging  202-619-0641</p>	<p><b>June</b>  <u>Graduation</u>    <u>Father's Day</u></p>

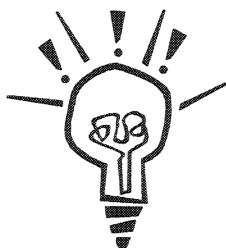
<p><b>July</b>  <u>National Recreation &amp; Parks Mo.</u>  National Recreation &amp; Parks Assoc.  1-800-626-6772</p> <p><u>International Joke Day (1)</u></p> <p><u>I Forgot Day (2)</u></p> <p><u>Christmas in July</u></p> <p><u>National Parents Day (30)</u></p>	<p><b>August</b>  <u>Vacations</u></p> <p><u>Friendship Day (2)</u></p>	<p><b>September</b>  <u>National Cholesterol Education Mo.</u>  National Heart, Lung, &amp; Blood Institute 301-251-1222</p> <p><u>National 5 A Day for Better Health Campaign</u>  National Cancer Institute  1-800-4-CANCER</p> <p><u>Family Health &amp; Fitness Day</u>—last Sunday  Health Information Resource Center  1-800-828-8225</p> <p><u>National Hispanic Heritage Month</u>  National Council of La Raza  202-785-1670</p>
<p><b>October</b>  <u>Family Health Month</u>  Am. Academy of Family Physicians 1-800-274-2237</p> <p><u>Child Health Day</u>—1<sup>st</sup> Monday  National Institute of Child Health &amp; Human Development,  National Institutes of Health  301-496-5133</p> <p><u>National School Lunch Week</u>—2<sup>nd</sup> week  American School Food Service Assoc. 1-800-877-8822</p> <p><u>American Heart Walking Event</u>—1<sup>st</sup> weekend  American Heart Association  1-800-AHA-USA1</p> <p><u>World Walking Day</u>—3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  Trim &amp; Fitness International Sport for All Assoc. Frankfurt, Germany 011-49-69-67-00-225</p>	<p><b>November</b>  <u>National Diabetes Month</u>  American Diabetes Association  1-800-274-2237</p> <p><u>Patient Education Week</u>—1<sup>st</sup> full week  International Patient Ed Council  301-948-1863</p> <p><u>"Turkey Trot Events"</u>—held close to Thanksgiving</p>	<p><b>December</b>  <u>Holiday Season</u></p>



## References and Resources

- (1) "Chocolate Fever" by Robert Kimmel Smith. A Yearling Book, Dell Publishing, New York, 1972.
- (2) National Cancer Institute  
6130 Executive Blvd. MSC 7330  
EPN 232  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7346  
301-496-8520 or 1-800-4-CANCER  
<http://www.dcpnc.nci.nih.gov/5aday>  
Dole 5 A Day  
Dole Food Company, Inc.  
Nutrition Program  
155 Bovet, Suite 476  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
FAX 415-570-5250  
[www.dole5aday.com](http://www.dole5aday.com)  
*Miscellaneous nutrition information including recipes, CD ROM's, and posters*





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**Module Tip:**

Simple plans + a small investment of time = great links!

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**FAQs:**

- ❑ **Question:** It takes a lot of time to coordinate activities for linking within the school. What can we do to make it easier?
- ❑ **Answer:** The first time probably will require a little extra time. Start small, and schedule planning times convenient for all who will be involved. It will get easier!
- ❑ **Question:** How do you find community resources? They seem elusive.  
**Answer:** The coalition is key for networking to identify the links between the school and community.

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**Module Glossary:**

**5 A Day:** A campaign by the National Cancer Institute that provides free (or minimal cost) materials, information, and ideas for increasing intake of fruits and vegetables.

**CDC:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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### Check "Linking" Actions

1. Use your Environmental Change Plan to check actions for nutrition education links.
2. Identify which the following links are addressed in the plans.
3. Write down ideas for missing links and incorporate them into your plans as possible.

#### Links with the School Meal Program:

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#### Links with the Physical Activity:

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#### Links with Administration/School Board:

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#### Links with Parents:

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#### Links with the Community:

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Example



## Environmental Change Plan

Objective: By 2005, there will be at least 9 actions a year that link school meals, the classroom, PE, administrators, parents, and community.

Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply.	Actions and resources needed to implement the plan	Problems to resolve	Who takes action, and by what date?	Review—results of actions Check all that apply.
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reward	<p><b>Action:</b> <i>Form a committee to oversee planning</i></p> <p><b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>not applicable</i></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> <i>Committee guidelines—to include committee members from all components</i></p>		<p><i>The coalition will determine a chairperson and committee by 10/31/04</i></p>	<p><b>Communication:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's <p><b>Time:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p><b>Location:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p><b>Resources:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p><b>Participation:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <p><b>Overall:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise
<p>-or-</p> <p><b>Problems resolved:</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<p><b>Action:</b> <i>The committee will set-up tools, a communication and review system, and help with implementation</i></p> <p><b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>announcements over PA system, monthly newspaper column, and parent newsletter</i></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> <i>paper, copies, time, materials for action events</i></p>		<p><i>The chairperson will ensure the committee has completed the calendar by 11/30/04</i></p>	<p><i>The chairperson will ensure tools are identified and a review system developed by 12/15/04</i></p>

Comments: An example of the Event Planning Tool for one of the committee's calendar events is found on the next page.

**Example**



## Event Planning Tool

**Title Of Program/Project/Event:** Going for the Green – St. Patrick's Day Celebration

☐ Media ☒ School ☐ Business ☐ Community

**Target Audience:** (check all planned for your activity)

☐ Students ☐ Parents ☐ Teachers ☐ School meal director and staff \_\_\_\_

☒ School administrators 3-5 ☒ Business/community leaders/community-at-large 10-15

**Outline/Description/Objectives/Ideas:**

1. Students and staff wear green
2. Decorate cafeteria with artwork of green veggies
3. Cafeteria serves Blarney Green Pears and Touch of Gold Broccoli (grated carrots sprinkled on broccoli)
4. Students and teachers talk about "green" foods and vote for the most popular green food
5. Students bring healthy green snacks to the classroom
6. A "Pot-of-Gold" relay is held at recess or in PE
7. Recipes are sent home to parents
8. Parents and community members are invited to come to school to vote on the green veggie artwork

**Marketing Plan:** Announce in parent newsletter and on school lunch monthly menu.

**Resource Materials/Supplies/Food/Handouts:**

Recipes and menu plans

Art supplies for decorating the cafeteria

Instructions for the "green food" contest

Instructions for the relay

**Costs/Funding Source:**

Minimal

**Manpower Needed:**

Classroom/Cafeteria/PE

**Space/Time/Date Requirements:**

No special needs

**Prep Time:**

1-2 hours

**Alternate Plan:**

Instead of "green foods" have a "Pot of Gold at the End of the Rainbow Day." Have the students and staff dress in the color of their favorite fruit or vegetable, and have other students guess what it is. Have students bring their favorite fruit or vegetable for tasting by the class. Also request a recipe containing their favorite food!

**Comments:** Students wanted to repeat the activity next year!